



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**AFGHANISTAN**



## Health

USAID supports the Government of Afghanistan's efforts to improve health for all citizens, particularly women, children, and the most vulnerable. We support the delivery of basic health and hospital services across all 34 provinces and we partner with the Ministry of Public Health to develop effective private sector partnerships to deliver quality, financially sustainable health services, especially for underserved populations. Despite new challenges posed by COVID-19, USAID is committed to forging a resilient, high-quality health system that is accountable, affordable, and accessible.

## Major Highlight

USAID helped the Government of Afghanistan increase access to health services from nine percent to 87 percent of Afghans living within a two-hour distance of a health facility, providing minimum primary or secondary care.

## Improving the Health of Mothers and Babies

Over the last two decades, USAID has played a major role in decreasing maternal and child deaths in Afghanistan. We supported the Ministry of Public Health to implement the Basic Package of Health Services and Essential Package of Hospital Services in public facilities across the country. These packages focus on interventions that address the main causes of child morbidity and mortality. They also help address the leading causes of death among pregnant mothers. With substantial USAID support since 2002, the Government of Afghanistan decreased the estimated child mortality rate to 60 deaths per 1,000 live births—cutting the mortality rate in half over two decades. Similarly, thanks to USAID's maternal health interventions, maternal deaths decreased to an estimated 638 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2017, cutting the rate by more than half compared to 2000.



## Providing Critical Health Services for Women and Girls

Cultural barriers can have a major impact on the health of women and girls. In many places, women are not permitted to see a male doctor, limiting women's access to critical health services. In 2002, the number of female health workers—medical doctors, midwives, pharmacists, and nurses—in public facilities totaled 581. To increase the number of female health workers and give more women access to needed care, USAID helped to develop a first-of-its-kind midwifery education program in early 2005. The midwifery education program has helped give more than 5,000 midwives critical skills and knowledge to provide services for pregnant mothers. The program has since been scaled-up and adopted by the World Bank and European Union donors.



## Strengthening Health Systems

USAID supported the establishment of the National Disease Surveillance and Response and the national Health Information Systems which have been used for COVID-19 surveillance. With additional USAID support to integrate the systems, the wait time for availability of district-level COVID-19 case data was drastically reduced from one week to one day. This has helped Afghanistan more efficiently track case notifications, detect active disease, and respond to COVID-19 cases across the country.



## Contacts

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